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## **V CORPS' 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION CONDUCTS REHEARSES 'RELIEF IN PLACE' WITH NATIONAL GUARD DIVISION**

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**TIKRIT, Iraq** — In an effort to ensure their upcoming transfer of authority takes place without a hitch, V Corps' 1st Infantry Division and the 42nd Infantry Division conducted a day-long Relief In Place rehearsal here.

The 42nd, part of the New York Army National Guard, is scheduled to take responsibility for the north-central Iraq area of operations by the end of February for a yearlong tour of duty. The "Rainbow Division" is the first National Guard contingent to be in charge of an entire area of operations in the Middle East.

An estimated 200 division leaders, including both division commanding generals, filled the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center theater for the rehearsal.

In the days leading up to the dry run, each brigade and battalion commander from the 42nd shadowed his 1st Infantry Division counterpart, and both drafted a relief plan. The commanders presented their plans during the rehearsal, and the generals approved them or made suggestions for improvements.

The plans presented to Maj. Gen. John Batiste of the 1st Infantry Division and the 42nd Infantry Division's Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto included troop rest plans, movement from Kuwait to Iraq and the 1st's withdrawal from Iraq.

Prior to the presentations, 1st Infantry Division officials gave the 42nd's leaders a brief overview of the area of operations, which includes five provinces and a briefing on topics such as the various tribes in each province, their economic status, population, the area's supply routes.

Also discussed were the capabilities of the enemy, his tendencies, trends, lessons learned and attacks insurgents have launched against coalition forces.

The rehearsal was something of a brainstorming and advice session as well. The 1st Infantry Division's seasoned troops told their 42nd counterparts about the challenges they faced and lessons it learned the past year.

Batiste said the rehearsal was "all about sharing good ideas," and urged the 42nd to use force against the enemy whenever necessary, but added that their goal should be to end the violence in Iraq. He also suggested that the Rainbow Division's commanders trust their junior commanders and allow them to experiment and learn from their mistakes, and "let business be NCO business."

The Rainbow Division headquarters mobilized in early June, coming here to get the lay of the land, get acquainted with the area and learn from the 1st Infantry Division.

In mid-June, another headquarters team -- mainly the division support command -- returned for another reconnaissance. Then in July the brigade and battalion

commanders conducted a leaders' reconnaissance. Taluto and his staff returned in August for a third reconnaissance and continue to work closely with the 1ID commanders and staffs.

"Our reconnaissance has been constant and consistent, and I think it has been worth every effort," Taluto said in July.

Working with the 1st Infantry Division to get an idea of how they operate mirrors a return to school, Taluto said. He and his staff learned so much, including how the 1st Infantry Division prepared for its deployment, things it did well and things it could have done better or differently while in theater, the general said.

The divisions share the same birth year. The 1st Infantry Division was formed in June 1917, and the 42nd. They forged an early bond, fighting side-by-side during World War I. The Army deactivated the 42nd after World War I and reassembled it during the next world war. Once again, the two divisions' paths crossed during a conflict, as they fought across Europe. In 1947, the 42nd officially became a National Guard division, and has served in that capacity since. Today it stretches across nine states, but 67 percent of its Soldiers are located in New York and New Jersey.

